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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable MARK R. WARNER, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Spirit, whose inward fellowship means peace and power, dissolve the barriers that keep our souls from You. Deliver us from the self-sufficiency that will not recognize our need of You. Save us from spiritual blindness that sees the visible but is unaware of the invisible and eternal.

Lord, teach our lawmakers how to be victors over life and not victims of it and that to live worthily, they must put their faith in You. Whether on the mountaintop or in the valley, may they ever be aware that You are walking beside them. Give them, therefore, the wisdom to comprehend Your perspective, plan, and purpose.

We pray in Your loving Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MARK R. WARNER led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, January 29, 2010.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable MARK R. WARNER, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Virginia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WARNER thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following leader remarks, the Senate will proceed to a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each. There will be no rollcall votes today. The next vote will occur at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, February 1. The vote will be on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination of Patricia Smith to be Solicitor at the Department of Labor. I advise Senators that they should be here to vote. We are not going to extend the vote on Monday. We must finish the vote about 10 to 6. There will be a strict enforcement of that time. We have to finish for obvious reasons because the 30 hours starts running when we complete the vote. If we go past 6 o'clock, it is past midnight. We want to make sure the vote is over at 10 to 6. Everyone is forewarned that if they are late, they will not be counted as voting.

SUCCESSFUL LEGISLATIVE WEEK

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we had a very successful week legislatively. I extend my appreciation to Senators on both sides of the aisle, especially my friends on the Republican side. There were no 30 hours used. It worked out extremely well. There was ample time for debate, and there were issues that

were of concern to both parties. Of course, the issues are important to the country.

Without belaboring the issues on which we voted, I wish to spend just a minute on two issues—first, the pay-go rules we passed.

The Presiding Officer has been a great asset to the Senate. He has worked with the chairman of the Budget Committee, Senator CONRAD, and others to focus on finances of our country. The Presiding Officer was a very successful Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia and noted for what he did with budgetary matters in Virginia.

Pay-go rules are so important. We have rules now, like people have in their individual homes. We are working to do what people who work for a living do, and that is spend money we have. It is not as if we are inventing something new. During the Clinton years, we had pay-go rules. As a result of that, we were able to spend less money than we were taking in. For the first time in decades, in the last 3 years of the Clinton administration, we paid down the national debt by hundreds of billions of dollars. So I hope, looking into the future, we can continue doing that; that is, do it again. It is so important.

I extend my appreciation to Members of the House of Representatives, especially the Speaker and the majority leader, STENY HOYER. They have been focused on this pay-go for more than a year.

We were finally able to get it done over here. It is going to be good for the country. I think the things we did will continue to focus on the money that we do not have and the way we have to get our budget in order. I am especially happy we were able to give the doctors 5 years' reprieve from the Draconian rules that were facing doctors who take Medicare patients.

The other issue I wish to spend a minute on is last evening, again with the cooperation of all Senators, we

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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